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Enforcement Of Drug Import and Reimportation Laws

One of the main functions of the Utah Department of Commerce is to protect the public interest by ensuring that citizens are receiving U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved prescriptions. Unlicensed businesses claiming to be helping senior citizens by purchasing drugs from international pharmacies are in violation of the Utah Pharmacy Practice Act, the Medical Practice Act and The Code of Federal Regulations. Federal regulations restrict the reimportation of prescription drugs that were manufactured in a state and exported from the United States.

The Utah Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing (DOPL) continues to investigate complaints made against businesses that may be selling and/or dispensing prescription drugs when not licensed to do so. According to Utah statute, Section 58-17a-303, a license is required for Utah pharmacies as well as out-of-state mail order pharmacies shipping prescriptions into Utah.

According to Craig Jackson, Director of the Utah Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing, "There are no Canadian or other foreign mail order pharmacies licensed in Utah." Anyone conducting an out-of-state/foreign mail order pharmacy or anyone who facilitates the shipping, mailing or delivering of a dispensed prescription drug to a resident in Utah without a license is doing so illegally.

Consumers who are buying medicines and medical products from unregulated sources need to be aware of the risks that they are taking. The FDA warns that medications purchased abroad may present health risks. Some imported medications – even those that bear the name of a U.S.-approved product – may, in fact, be counterfeit versions that are unsafe or even completely ineffective. If you have any questions about the use of any medication, contact your physician, your local pharmacist or the Utah Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing.